Responses to CIA /FOIA

Col. Leo F. Olsen, Jr.
Hq AF OSI
Dept. of the Air Force
Washington, D.C. 20314

Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
5/21/77

Dear Colonel Olsen,

Because the second paragraph of your helpful letter of 10/5/77 indicates I might expect more information I have delayed responding to it. I do thank you for it.

I can understand that as you say in your third paragraph you do not know what has been made available. I am sure you can understand that I also have no way of knowing what your files hold. I think that perhaps the best means available to you that will not require unauthorized disclosures by you is to consult with Mr. Marion Johnson at the National Archives. I am confident that his recollection is excellent and that he has the best knowledge inside the government of what is available.

What follows is so that you can better understand my request.

I believe I have written more books on the John Kennedy assassination than anyone else and have made more use of FOIA on this subject than anyone else. My purposes have been for my own writing and for the compilation of an unofficial archive. I have begun the archival deposit in a university system. For the latter purpose I want to obtain all available information relating to the JFK assassination. Most of what I am now obtaining is for this public purpose. What relates to Oswald is only part of this, of course.

Among the Air Force records I have not been able to obtain are those relating to Oswald's special training at Keesler Field.

I would appreciate it if you would review your third paragraph, beginning with the opening sentence, "Since we do not know all the information which has been made public regarding Lee Harvey Oswald, we may provide you only with information which may be released in accordance with" FOIA. I have difficulty believing that now there can be any "information...regarding Lee Harvey Oswald" that is not required to be released under FOIA. With the determinations already made by the Attorney General and the courts even if he had been a government agent I do not believe that, today, can be withheld.

For those who have no subject-matter skill or background there are real problems in deciding what can be released on this subject. A conscientious public servant may well believe the withholding of what is already public is required. However difficult a determination may be I believe that the decision of the Attorney General, that the assassination of President Kennedy is a case of major historical importance, is what should control such decisions and that it does require the release of what otherwise might be withheld. In addition, the new Attorney General has decided that in FOIA cases only what is certain to cause hurt is to be withheld.

There are or should be Air Force records relating to Oswald through the late David William Ferrie. These also happen to include Keesler Field records. Ferrie was in the New Orleans CAP. Allegations of homosexuality against him are public. He was so charged. This is not irrelevant in relationship to the Keesler records. He did take CAP cadets there and there was official interest.

I thank you for what you sent. Even if you withhold what is public I agree with the privacy principle and raise no questions about it with you. There is a difference between Oswald and Pic.

I recognize that without subject-matter knowledge you can have problems in this/. If I can help you resolve them please ask.

Sincerely,
Harold Weisberg